

## Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2862  
INFO DSAA WASHDC  
DA WASHDC  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
USDAO NDJAMENA CHAD

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 YAOUNDE 3549

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MASS, CM  
SUBJ: ASSESSMENT OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR FY 1979:  
PRESENT AND FUTURE THREATS

REF: (A) STATE 133136, (B) YAOUNDE 3484, (C) YAOUNDE 3440,  
(D) YAOUNDE 3005

1. SUMMARY: THIS MESSAGE TRANSMITS THE RESPONSE TO PARA  
SUB PARAGRAPHS A THROUGH C ON THE PRESENT AND FUTURE THREATS  
PERCEIVED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON  
(GURC). REFTELS B AND C OUTLINED THE US INTERESTS AND TRANS-  
MITTED THE CURRENT PROPOSED EQUIPMENT LIST. END SUMMARY.

2. HISTORICALLY THE GURC HAS FELT THREATENED (SINCE EVEN BEFORE  
ITS INDEPENDENCE) BECAUSE OF THE DISSIDENT UNION DE POPULATIONS  
DE CAMEROUN (UPC) ATTEMPTS TO SUBVERT THE DULY CONSTITUTED  
GOVERNMENT THROUGH AN ARMED REBELLION AND ACTS OF TERRORISM.  
WHILE THE GURC WAS EVENTUALLY SUCESSFUL IN PUTTING DOWN THIS  
REBELLION AND INFILTRATING THE UPC TO LEARN OF ITS PLANNED  
ACTIVITIES, THERE HAS BEEN A RESIDUAL SUSPICION OF THOSE GOVERN-  
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MENTS (USSR, CUBA, CONGO AND TO A LESSER EXTENT ALGERIA NAD  
THE PRC) WHICH AT ONE TIME ACTIVELY SUPPORTED THE REBELS.  
THIS RESIDUAL SUSPICION HAS LEAD TO ALMOST A PARANOID FEAR  
OF ANY RENEWED UPC ACTIVITY.

3. TWO YEARS AGO AT THE REQUEST OF THE USG, THE GURC TOOK THE  
LEAD IN OPPOSING THE EXCLUSIVE RECOGNITION BY THE OAU OF THE

MPLA. LATER WHEN THE MPLA, LARGELY WITH CUBAN AND RUSSIAN SUPPORT, PROVED SUCCESSFUL IN GAINING CONTROL OVER MUCH OF ANGOLA AND RECEIVING RECOGNITION FROM MANY OAU MEMBERS, THE GURC FOLLOWED SUIT, BUT THE GURC FELT THAT THE USG HAD LET IT DOWN BY NOT SUPPORTING THE OTHER ANGOLAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS AND BY NOT ACHIEVING AN AGREEMENT WITH THE USSR ON LIMITING THAT COUNTRY'S SUPPORT OF THE MPLA. THE GURC CONTINUES TO VIEW EVENTS IN ANGOLA, PARTICULARLY THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF CUBAN TROOPS, WITH SUSPICION. WOUNGLY MASSAGA, ONE OF THE TOP UPC LEADERS, IS A TECHNICAL ADVISOR TO NETO. MASSAGA'S CONTINUED ROLE IN ANGOLA FEEDS GURC'S FEAR THAT NETO HAS NOT FORGOTTEN THE GURC'S LEADERSHIP IN OPPOSITION TO EXCLUSIVE RECOGNITION OF THE MPLA AND THAT MASSAGA WILL SHOMEHOW INFLUENCE NETO AND/OR THE CUBANS TO SUPPORT RENEWED UPC SUBERSIVE ACTIVITY IN CAMEROON. THIS FEAR WAS REINFORCED BY THE RECENT KATANGESE INCURSION INTO SHABA PROVINCE OF ZAIRE. WHILE ANGOLA AND ZIARE DO NOT BORDER ON CAMEROON, THE GURC VIEWS BOTH OF THOSE GOVERNMENTS AS INHERENTLY UNSTABLE AND IS CONCERNED THAT THIS INSTABILITY WILL CONTINUE TO POSE A THREAT TO THE REGION IN GENERAL AND CAMEROON IN PARTICULAR.

4. THE THREAT WHICH THE GURC PERCEIVES FROM THE UPC IS CENTERED ON THEIR ACTIVITIES IN FRANCE, ALGERIAN, AND THE CONGO. THERE ARE PERHAPS UP TO 20,000 CAMEROONIANS, MANY OF THEM CONSIDERED TO BE UPC SUPPORTERS IF NOT DIEHARDS, RESIDENT IN FRANCE. THE PRESENT FRENCH GOVERNMENT IS AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER

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OF CAMEROON; HOWEVER, THE GURC FEARS THAT IF FRANCE TURNS TO THE LEFT AND MITTERAND SUCCEEDS IN ACHIEVING POWER, THE PRESENT WARM RELATIONSHIP WHICH EXISTS WILL BE LOST AND THAT THAT UPC WILL BE PERMITTED TO FUNCTION OPENLY, IF NOT WITH THE ACTIVE SUPPORT BY SOME OF THE LEFTIST ELEMENTS IN FRANCE. WHILE THE RECENTLY DEPARTED ALGERIAN CHARGE MAINTAINED THAT THERE ARE NO UPC ELEMENTS REMAINING IN ALGERIA, THE GURC HAS EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY AND BELIEVES THAT THESE ELEMENTS ARE ATTMEPTING TO SECURE THE SUPPORT OF OTHER LIBERATION MOVEMENTS REPRESENTED IN ALGIERS FOR TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT. CLOSER TO HOME, THE GURC IS WORRIED ABOUT THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF UPC MEMBERS IN CONGO AND THE ACTIVE ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ROLE TAKEN BY RUSSIAN AND CUBAN ADVISORS THERE. THIS FEAR WAS REINFORCED LAST YEAR BY THE PARTICIPATION OF A CUBAN ADVISOR ON A BOUNDARY SETTLEMENT COMMISSION. THE PRESENT CONGOLESE GOVERNMENT HEADED BY YOMBI OPANGO IS CONSIDERED BY MANY TO BE MORE MODERATE THAN THE RECENTLY DEPOSED NGOUZBE GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, AHIDJO HAS NOT HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO SIZE UP YOMBI OPENZO AND THE GURC IS WITHHOLDING JUDGEMENT UNTIL THERE HAS BEEN MORE CONTACT AT THE HIGHER LEVELS. IN ADDITION THE FACT THAT YOMBI OPANGO CAME TO POWER THROUGH THE ASSASSINATION OF NGOUABE REINFORCES THE GURC'S

FEAR OF BEING THREATENED BY THE BASIC INSTABILITY OF ITS NEIGHBORS.

5. THE GURC DOES NOT COMPREHEND EVENTS IN EG. THE ACTIVITIES OF LIFE PRESIDENT MASIE CONTINUED TO BAFFLE OFFICIALS OF THE GURC. WITHIN THE PAST YEAR THE EG AMBASSADOR HAS ASKED FOR ASYLUM AND SINCE DEPARTED FOR SPAIN AND THE GURC CHWTGE WAS HARASSED TO THE POINT WHERE THE GURC WITHDREW HIM, RATHER THAN HAVE HIM SUBJECTED TO FURTHER HUMILIATION. THERE IS A CONSTANT PROBLEM WITH 10-20 REFUGEES A WEEK FLOWING INTO THE COUNTRY IN THE MA'AN AND THE MBAM AREAS. HOWEVER, MOST OF THESE ARE FARMERS WHO ARE RELOCATED AWAY FROM THE BORDER AREA. ANY HIGH OFFICIALS, SUCH AS THE FORMER AMBASSADOR, ARE USUALLY ASSISTED IN MOVING TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN ORDER THAT MASIE NOT HAVE ANY BASIS FOR HIS SUSPICIONS THAT THE GURC  
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PERMITS EG EXILE GROUPS TO OPERATE WITHIN ITS TERRITORY. THE MASSIVE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE PRESENCE OF LARGE NUMBERS OF SOVIETS, CUBANS AND CHINESE, AND THE SOVIET REPAIR FACILITY AT LUBA FEED THE FEAR BY GURC OFFICIALS THAT EG COULD BE USED AS A BASE FOR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN CAMEROON.

6. THE BORDERING COUNTRY WITH WHICH THE GURC HAS THE CLOSEST AFFINITY IS BAGON. NOW THAT BONGO HAS BECOME THE PRESIDENT OF THE OAU FOR THE NEXT YEAR, MOST GURC OFFICIALS APPEAR TO BELIEVE THAT HE WILL MAINTAIN MODERATE POSITIONS. HOWEVER, EVEN HERE THERE ARE SOME FEARS THAT THE GOBONESE COULD POSE A THREAT BECAUSE OF A RECENT BORDER INCIDENT WHERE THE GABONSES DESTROYED A RECENTLY VACATED ARMY POST LOCATED ON CAMEROONIAN TERRITORY AND THE NOT-ALWAYS TOO FRIENDLY ECONOMIC COMPETITION WHICH THESE TWO MEMBERS OF UDEAC SOMETIMES PURSUE (I.E., IT COSTS CAMEROON MORE TO IMPORT REFINED PETROLEUM PRODUCTS FROM GABON THAN FROM THE CARIBBEAN). THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF A CAMEROONIAN REFINERY WILL ONLY EXACERBATE THE PROBLEM OF OVER SUPPLY OF REFINED PRODUCTS IN THE REGION.

7. AS A LAND-LOCKED COUNTRY, THE CENTRAL AFRICAN EMPIRE IS DEPENDENT ON THE CONGO AND CAMEROON FOR ACCESS TO THE SEA. THE GURC HASVIEWED THE SOMEWHAT ERRATIC ACTIVITIES OF EMPEROR BOKASSA WITH SOME APPREHENSION AND HIS DECEMBER 1976 DECLARATION OF HIMSELF AS EMPEROR HAS ONLY ENHANCED THESE FEELINGS OF APPREHENSION, WHICH BORDERS AT TIMES ON RIDICULE AND CONCERN THAT NON-AFRICAN STATES VIEW EVENTS IN THE CAE AS THE AFRICAN NORM.

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ACTION PM-05

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2863  
INFO DSAA WASHDC  
DA WASHDC  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
USDAO NDJAMENA CHAD

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8. CHAD, LIKE THE CAE, DEPENDS ON CAMEROON (AS WELL AS NIGERIAL) FOR TIS ACCESS TO THE SEA. THE OVERTHROW OF TOMBGOAYE BY MALLOUM, THE SUBSEQUENT IMPORTAION OF A LARGE SHIPMENT OF RUSSIAN ARMS WHICH TRANSITED CAMEROON, AND THE RECENT LOSS OF MUCH OF THE AOUZOU STRIP HAVE HEIGHTENED GURC FEARS OF WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE BASICALLY AN UNSTABLE AND WEAK GOVERNMENT.

9. FINALLY, THERE IS FEAR OF NEIGHBORING GIANT NIGERIA WITH ITS 1050 MILE, LARGELY UNDEFENDED, BORDER. SINCE JANUARY 1966 THERE HAVE BEEN FOUR VIOLENT CHANGES IN GOVERNMENT AND MANY GURC OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT AS NIGERIAN CHIEF OF STATE GENERAL OBASANJO PURSUES HIS DETERMINATION TO RETURN THE COUNTRY TO CIVILIAN RULE, THERE WILL BE FURTHER UNREST. THE RATHER POROUS FRINTIER SITUATION WHERE AT LEAST ONE INCIDENT IN THE PASY YEAR RESULTED IN FATALITIES, AND THE EXPOSED POSITION OF CAMEROONIAN PETROLEUM PRODUCTION FACILITIES AND THE PROPOSED REFINERY FEED CAMEROONIAN FEARS OF NIGERIA AND ITS 250,000-MAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. NIGERIA'S VAST POPULATION (AT LEAST 10 TIMES CAMEROONS) AND PETROLEUM WEALTH REINFORCE CAMEROON'S "CANADIAN" COMPLES. (LIKE BEING IN BED WITH AN ELEPHANT WHO MAY ROLE OVER AT  
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ANY TIME.)

10. IN SUM, WHILE GURC OFFICIALS CONTINUE TO ASSURE US THAT THEY WANT TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH ALL NEIGHBORS, THEY BELIEVE IT IS PRUDENT IF NOT ESSENTIAL THAT THEY HAVE ADEQUATE

MEANS TO DEFEND THEMSELVES IN THE VENT THAT THE INHERENT INSTABILITY WHICH THEY PERCEIVE IN THE REGION SPILLS OVER INTO CAMEROON. THEY VIEW WITH SUSPICION THE USSR AND ITS CUBAN SURROGATE'S ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION AND BELIEVE THAT THE GOAL OF THE SOVIET UNION IS TO DESTABLIZE THE GURC IN A CURRENT DESIGN TO CREATE CHAOS IN THE REGION AND PROFIT THEREFROM. WHILE THEY HAVE IN THE PAST BEEN LARGE DEPENDENT ON THE FRENCH FOR THEIR ARMS, THEY HAVE BEEN DISAPPOINTED WITH DEGREE OF SUPPORT AND THE OBSOLESCE IF NOT OBSOLETE EQUIPMENT THEY HAVE RECEIVED FROM THAT SOURCE. THEREFORE, ON JULY 5, 1976 (76 YAOUNDE 2417) THE GURC TURNED TO THE US IN AN EFFORT TO DIVERSIFY THEIR SOURCE OF SUPPLY AND TO ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN THE MINIMUM MILITARY EQUIPMENT WHICH THEY CONSIDER ESSENTIAL TO DEFEND THEMSELVES.

11. WHILE MANY OF THE GURC FEARS ARE EXAGGERATED, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE INHERENT INSTABILITY OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN THE REGION AND THE WELL-KNOWN SOVIET PENCHANT FOR TAKING ADVANTAGE OF TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY (SUCH AS ANGOLA AND NOW THE HORN OF AFRICA) LEADS ONE TO CONCLUDE THAT, WHILE THE THREAT MAY NOT BE AS GRAVE AS PICTURED BY THE GURC, THERE IS INDEED A THREAT TO THE GOVERNMENT. THIS THREAT IS NOT SO MUCH AN ARMED INVASION BY ANY OF THE NEIGHBORS, BUT SOVIET/CUBAN SUPPORT OF UPC SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES BEING LAUNCHED FROM ONE OF THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. OR A BORDER INCIDENT GETTING OUT OF HAND. AT THE PRESENT TIME, WE BELIEVE THE GURC IS DETERMINED TO KEEP BORDER INCIDENTS UNDER CONTROL. THE EMBASSY ASSESSMENT OF THESE THREATS THEREFORE DIFFERS ONLY WITH RESPECT TO THE DEGREE THAT THE THREAT EXISTS. HOWEVER, IN THE  
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HIGHLY FLUID REGIONAL CONTEXT AND, IN VIEW OF THE LONG LEAD TIME THAT IS REQUIRED TO ACQUIRE WEAPONS SYSTEMS UNDER FMS CREDITS, IT IS FELT THAT THE GURC REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE SUPPORTED FOR FY 79 AT THE SAME LEVEL AS FY 78.

12. THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT WHICH THE GURC HAS PRESENTLY IS NOT ADEQUATE TO MEET THE PERCEIVED THREATS. HOWEVER, RECEIVING THE EQUIPMENT REQUESTED WOULD ADD TO THE CREDIBILITY OF THE GURC MILITARY. THE GURC HAS A MAXIMUM OF 13,500 MEN IN THE MILITARY (7000) AND GENDARMERIE (6,500) WITH ONLY GENDARMES IN THE VAST NORTHERN PROVINCE. THERE ARE ONLY FOUR INFANTRY BATTALIONS WITH A PARTIAL ARMORED BATTALION AND ARTILLERY BATTERY TO COVER THE REMAINDER OF THE COUNTRY. THE GURC PLANS ON RAISING ANOTHER BATTALION BY 1980 IN ORDER TO STATION IT IN THE NORTH. THERE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY ATTEMPT TO HAVE A RAPID BUILD UP OF MILITARY FORCES WHICH WOULD OVEREXTEND THE FINANCIAL AND MANPOWER RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY.  
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## Message Attributes

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